

## **ROOTS PILGRIMAGE Q & A**

### **What is Roots Pilgrimage?**

This new and unique pilgrimage, a collaboration of the Hungarian Unitarian Church and the UUPCC, will bring Unitarians from Transylvania's Kolozsvár/Torda/Aranyosszék region and their North American partners to explore their shared Unitarian religious heritage and their spiritual, cultural, and theological beliefs, values and traditions. No doubt Roots pilgrims will discover both areas of commonality and areas of noteworthy differences in their individual Unitarian/Universalist faiths. Lectures, panel discussions, small group conversations and spiritual practices will help Transylvanian and North American participants explore large spiritual themes:

- Birth/origin: Where do we come from? What's the origin of the universe? If we believe in God, what was God's role in creation and in life? This topic will get us into the intersection of religion and science.
- Development through relationship: What do we believe about relationships with a life partner, family, friends, co-workers, fellow Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists, strangers in our country and other countries, refugees? How do we understand community? Where is God in relationships? What do we believe about sexuality, marriage, and procreation? This topic will get us into ethics and social justice.
- Finding fulfillment in life: What is our religious/spiritual understanding of paid work, volunteer work, work at home (e.g., parenting, caring for elders)? Do we believe in a sense of call to our life's work (paid or unpaid)? What other ways in addition to relationships and work (paid and unpaid) do we find fulfillment?
- Death/grief: What do we believe about dying? What do we believe about the afterlife? What is the nature of the legacies we leave behind us when we die? How do we grieve? No spirituality is complete without considering the last chapter of our lives as well as what may or may not life beyond this life.

This inaugural Roots Pilgrimage is part of the year-long celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda and our Unitarian heritage of religious freedom.

### **When is Roots Pilgrimage**

Roots Pilgrimage begins late in the day on July 9 and ends on July 17.

### **Where will Roots Pilgrimage take place?**

Roots Pilgrimage will start and end in Kolozsvár (Romanian name: Cluj). After a day trip to the Verespatak (Roşia Montană) gold mining area, pilgrims will settle in Aranyosszék (Scaunul Ariesului), the Aranyos (Arieş) River valley area forty-five minutes southwest of Kolozsvár. This is an important region in Transylvanian Unitarianism.

### **Who will be on Roots Pilgrimage?**

The Roots pilgrimage group will exclusively or primarily be members from the fifteen Unitarian churches in the Kolozsvár/Torda/Aranyosszék region and people from their North American partner congregations. Registration will initially be open to people from these thirty Transylvanian and North American congregations. If the pilgrimage doesn't fill up, it may be opened beyond these thirty congregations. The pilgrimage is open to both clergy and lay members. The maximum number of Transylvanian and North American participants is 50.

### **Where will we stay?**

Roots pilgrims will stay in hotels in Kolozsvár and primarily in small guest houses in Aranyosszék.

### **Who will lead the pilgrimage?**

Roots Pilgrimage will be led equally by Transylvanian and North American Unitarian/Universalist leaders. The planning team includes Rev. Robert Balint and Rev. Norbert Racz from the Hungarian Unitarian Church and Rev. Roger Bertschausen, Rev. Andrew Weber, and Rodger Matlage from the US. Others will join them in providing content as well as leading discussions and worship.

### **Are there any trip extensions?**

Yes. Participants may arrive early (on July 7) for a pre-pilgrimage extension in Kolozsvár. The Kolozsvár pre-pilgrimage extension will include attending the dedication of the Center for Religious Freedom in the former Bishop's House across the street from the Hungarian Unitarian Church headquarters on July 7, Sunday morning worship at Kolozsvár 1 church on July 8, and an international conference on religious freedom on July 8.

Pilgrims may extend their pilgrimage in the other direction by adding the post-pilgrimage Budapest extension. Pilgrims choosing this option will travel by chartered bus to Budapest on July 17. July 18 will be highlighted by a morning guided bus and walking tour that will include Castle Hill, Hero's Square, and the Jewish Quarter. After an orientation to the Budapest Metro system and assistance in purchasing passes, the afternoon and evening of July 18 and all of July 19 will

be open for travelers to sightsee on their own. The UUPCC will offer an optional visit on July 19 to the Shoe Memorial and the Parliament grounds.

### **How much does Roots Pilgrimage cost?**

The base cost of the pilgrimage for North Americans is \$875 for double occupancy rooms plus a non-refundable \$150 registration fee. Meals and group transportation in Transylvania are included; airfare is not included. North American Roots pilgrims will stay in hotels in Kolozsvár on the nights of July 9 and 16 (with an option to get a single room at a cost of \$40) and in Aranyosszék on the nights of July 10-15. The Aranyosszék accommodations will be primarily in guesthouses. Given the number of North American and Kolozsvár/Torda pilgrims needing to stay in Aranyosszék, it will not be possible to offer single rooms, so all arrangements in Aranyosszék will be for double occupancy. Pilgrims have the option of adding a single room supplement for the two nights in Kolozsvár for \$40.

The Kolozsvár pre-pilgrimage extension costs \$250 for double occupancy with the option to add a single supplement for an additional \$60. Meals are included.

The Budapest post-pilgrimage extension costs \$575 for double occupancy with the option to add a single supplement for an additional \$135. The price includes 3 night accommodation at the Hotel Belvedere (4\*\*\*\*) with breakfast each morning, lunch in transit and an arrival dinner on July 17, an English speaking tour director for the half-day guided tour, and ground transportation from Kolozsvár to Budapest.

### **How do I register for the pilgrimage?**

Register at <https://uupcc.z2systems.com/eventReg.jsp?event=297&>. A non-refundable \$150 registration fee must be paid to register. The UUPCC is using a new database; even if you had a user name and password in our old database, you will need to set up a new user name and password. If you have any problems registering, contact the UUPCC at [office@uupcc.org](mailto:office@uupcc.org) or (314) 918-2618. There is an advance registration period through November 1, 2017, for North American partners of Unitarian churches in the Kolozsvár/Torda/Aranyosszék region. General registration will begin on November 2, 2017, and go through March 15, 2018.

### **I have health, mobility and/or dietary restrictions and I'm wondering if I should go on Roots Pilgrimage?**

See <http://www.uupcc.org/pilgrimages/advisory> for a detailed exploration of this topic. It is important that registrants seriously consider these issues if they have

restrictions. The UUPCC and the Hungarian Unitarian Church cannot make the pilgrimage work for everyone regardless of restrictions.

**What about the language barrier? How will we communicate with each other?**

Since developing a sense of kinship and community between Transylvanian and North American pilgrims is a goal of Roots Pilgrimage, we will make sure there enough translators on hand to make communication between North American and Transylvanian participants work.

**I looked at the schedule. I'm worried about being too busy. Should I be concerned?**

The schedule is pretty full. But we know that some pilgrims will want more quiet time. During the bulk of the pilgrimage in Aranyosszék, we will have quiet space set aside. Those wanting quiet time will be welcome to spend time in the quiet space whenever they feel the need.

**I'm not as comfortable in large discussions. Will there be a chance for sharing in small groups?**

Yes. The Discussion/questions segment will include small group time.

**What is a Lightning Round?**

Lightning Rounds will be short, energetic, very accessible explorations of the topic.

**I have more questions. Whom can I ask?**

Questions are welcome! Contact Rev. Roger Bertschausen at [roger@uupcc.org](mailto:roger@uupcc.org) or (314) 918-2613.